

# On-Demand Writing



## Summer 2007 Writing Training

Facilitators: Depeka Croft, Dena Cole

### **Contact Information**

Kentucky Department of Education  
500 Mero Street, CPT 19<sup>th</sup> Floor  
Frankfort, KY 40601  
(502) 564-2106

[Depeka.Croft@education.ky.gov](mailto:Depeka.Croft@education.ky.gov)  
[Dena.Cole@education.ky.gov](mailto:Dena.Cole@education.ky.gov)

# Prompts for KY's On-demand Writing Test, 2006/07

Weight of On-demand Writing in Accountability Index for Writing: 50%

## Kind of Writing for All Prompts: Transactive

### Grade Levels:

- 5: 1 Sample, 60 minutes  
 8: 1 Sample, 60 minutes  
 12: 1 Sample, 60 minutes  
      1 Sample, 60 minutes  
      (passage-based prompt)  
 5: 12 MC (revising and editing)  
 8: 12 MC (revising and editing)

### Prompt Structure:

Background/Situation: Establishes a Realistic Context;  
 Provides Information; Engages Student Writer

Directions/Writing Task: Establishes Purpose, Reader, Form  
 Note: At the HS level, some prompts may include reading materials, and students will be expected to respond to and refer to the materials in their writing.

### Forms:

Letter (e, m, h)  
 Article (e, m, h)  
 Editorial (m, h)  
 Speech (m, h)

## Broad Purposes for Writing:

**1**  
 Narrate an Incident to Support information  
 An Idea, Opinion, Position, etc.  
 Example:  
 Directions:  
 Write an editorial for your school newspaper about the importance of rules. Support your idea by writing about a time when knowing the rules proved to be important.

**2**  
 Persuade Readers to Take Action or to  
 Accept an Idea, Opinion, Conclusion, etc.  
 Example:  
 Directions:  
 Write the text of a speech to be given to the city council outlining your solution to one of two problems: cruising or loitering in the community. Convince the council to try your plan.

**3**  
 Inform: Present  
 and explanation  
 Example:  
 Directions:  
 Write a letter to be given to new students at your school to help them understand ways to be successful at the school.

## Analytical Scoring Based on KY Scoring Rubric:

Scorers assign points for designated areas of the writing:

- \_\_Content: Purpose and Audience;  
                   Idea Development and Support
- \_\_Structure: Organization (unity and coherence);  
                   Sentences (structure and length)
- \_\_Conventions: Language (grammar, usage, word choice)

## **“Best Practices” for Helping Students Develop as Writers**

Following is a selected list of practices that are widely advocated in professional literature as effective ways to help students develop as writers (and engage in writing to promote their learning).

1. Create a positive, supportive environment for student writers and for writing.
2. Arrange for students to write for a variety of purposes they find meaningful, relevant to their lives, experiences, interests and to their study in a well-designed unit of study.
3. Organize systematically for writing (writing workshop, writing time, writer's notebook).
4. “Invite writing.” Lead students into the writing (e.g., through reading, observing, talking, listening, observing, inquiry, drawing on a learning journal or writer's notebook). Engage students in writing.
5. Present and thoroughly discuss the writing task, the student's goals in writing.
6. Help students understand and apply important criteria for writing (through, for example, mini-lessons, reading, handouts, annotation of samples, modeling, exercises in a writer's notebook, conferences, student collaboration, etc.).
7. Help students plan/define their writing task (use of a planning form, graphic organizer, writer's notebook, conferences, collaboration with others, etc.).
8. Read and talk about samples of writing like those students will produce. Help students respond to/evaluate writing and identify important traits for the writing to be effective.
9. Model writing and strategies/techniques for writing; arrange for students to model.
10. Establish, display, and discuss a set of expectations or criteria for good writing. Repeatedly refer to the criteria. “Talk the talk.”
11. Engage students in writing processes: planning, learning, drafting, talking with others, revising, editing, and publishing their work.
12. Conduct mini-lessons on writing (characteristics of forms, criteria, strategies, etc.).
13. Talk with students about their work in progress, and arrange for students to talk with each other.
14. Provide students a variety of resources: samples, graphic organizers, checklists, diagrams, examples of writing techniques, writing handbooks, annotated samples of writing, etc.
15. Display students' writing (arrange for it to “go public” in some way).
16. Evaluate the writing, applying the established criteria; arrange for students to reflect on their work (writing or talking about it). Follow-up, as needed, to clear up misunderstanding of the subject matter or inaccuracies and to help students learn.

# Writer's Reference Sheet

*As you revise, ask yourself these important questions.*

*Follow the steps below to help you successfully write your response.*

## Focusing

- ✓ Read the task to identify your purpose and audience and the form of writing you should use.
- ✓ Think about information you may have (personal experiences, current issues, and your knowledge about this topic) that will help you fulfill the purpose in your response to the task and meet the needs of the audience.

## Prewriting

- ✓ After reading the task and focusing your thinking, begin to plan what you will write.
  - Select and narrow your topic.
  - Focus on your purpose by identifying a central/controlling idea.
  - Identify your audience's needs.
  - Generate and organize your ideas and support. (You may use graphic organizers).

## Drafting

- ✓ Write a first draft of your response to the task on paper provided by your teacher.

## Revising

- ✓ Be sure to review your writing for the following:
  - Focus and attention to purpose and audience
  - Development of ideas, details, and support
  - Clear organization, with transitions as necessary
  - Variety of sentence structures

## Editing

- ✓ Review your writing and correct any errors in sentence structure, word choice, punctuation, capitalization, and spelling.

## Publishing

- ✓ The final draft of your response must be written in your Student Response Booklet.

## When I organized my writing, did I

- include an attention-getting lead (such as a quote, a question, or a statement)?
- develop the body (with supporting details, transitions, and paragraphs)?
- conclude effectively (by referring back to the lead, asking the audience to take action, leaving the audience something to think about, etc.)?

## If it is a letter, have I

- used the correct letter form (business or friendly)?
- supported my purpose with details?
- answered my audience's anticipated questions?

## If it is an editorial, have I

- given my opinion?
- supported my opinion with reasons?
- given examples, statistics, stories, etc., to support each reason?

## If it is an article, have I

- focused on an interesting angle of the topic?
- supported my purpose with relevant idea development?
- used text features effectively (sections with headings, bulleted lists, etc.)?

## If it is a speech, have I

- met the needs of my audience?
- supported my purpose with details that will engage the audience?

**Remember to print or write neatly.**

# Preparing Prompts for On-demand Writing in the Classroom

## A Checklist of Key Features of Prompts

- \_\_\_1. The prompt engages students in transactive writing for a meaningful, realistic purpose that is relevant to their learning and their lives. The reason for writing is authentic.
- \_\_\_2. The prompt has three parts, usually indicated in separate paragraphs with headings:
  - Background/Situation (This part provides a realistic context for writing, one likely to be meaningful to students. In some cases, a text, visual, graph, chart, diagram, etc., may be included in the prompt.)
  - Directions/Writing Task
  - Scoring Criteria (The criteria are those identified in the Kentucky Scoring Guide, the same criteria applied to Writing Portfolios.)
- \_\_\_3. Directions ask students to write for one of these purposes:
  - **Narrate an incident:** The narrative is used to support the student's idea, conclusion, viewpoint, etc.
  - **Inform:** The writer provides information and ideas to help readers understand something or accomplish a task.
  - **Persuade:** The writer seeks to convince readers to take action or to accept the writer's idea about a topic.

Note: At the IHS level, prompts may include a text, and the writing task may require the students to analyze materials read and draw on them to accomplish their purposes in writing.
- \_\_\_4. Directions identify readership, and purpose. The readership is a realistic readership appropriate for the indicated purpose and form.
- \_\_\_5. Directions are phrased simply, concisely.  
Here is a model: Write a \_\_\_\_ (form) for \_\_\_\_ (readership) to \_\_\_\_ (purpose).
- \_\_\_6. Directions provide options for forms (grade 5: letter, article; grade 8: letter, article, editorial, text for speech; grade 12: letter, article, editorial, text for speech).
- \_\_\_7. The purpose for writing is general enough for students to write with ownership, meaning the prompt allows students to take different approaches; form and support their own opinions, ideas, interpretations, etc.; use different methods of development; draw on their own learning and experience; provide different forms of support, etc.
- \_\_\_8. For classroom purposes, the criteria are those identified in the Kentucky Writing Scoring Rubric, though teachers may modify the language somewhat to help young students and—for instructional purposes—may add criteria relevant to students' learning. The On-demand Writing prompts provided by the state, however, will not require students to apply specific content-area learning.
- \_\_\_9. If the teacher's intent is to give students experience writing independently and under time constraints, as is called for in the state assessment, then the prompt indicates the amount of time available and states that students may not help one another during the writing process.
- \_\_\_10. In some cases, the prompt encourages students to plan, draft, revise, and edit their writing.

## Common Problems in Classroom Prompts for Writing Like That Called for in the Kentucky On-demand Writing Test

1. The prompt does not call for writing with a purpose like that used in the KY prompts: narrate an incident, persuade, inform.
2. The prompt leads students to write a personal narrative, not to narrate an incident in order to accomplish a "transactive" purpose.
3. The prompt does not specify an authentic reader/audience or form, or does not specify a form used in the KY prompts.
4. The prompt "controls" the students' opinion, thinking, conclusion. It is not flexible enough so that students can reveal their own thinking and ownership in the writing.
5. The purpose for writing is not authentic; the prompt asks for writing to demonstrate learning to the teacher.
6. The purpose for writing is not stated directly and clearly. Or the purpose for writing is not specific. Students may be confused about what they are to accomplish through the writing.
7. The situation is not meaningful or may not be authentic. It is contrived and may not relate to students' lives and experiences. Or the Situation section of the prompt does not clearly or logically relate to the Directions section.
8. The prompt does not tell students to refer to the reading materials in their writing—if any reading materials are included in the prompt.
9. The prompt does not require idea development. It allows students to recite learning, summarize an activity or procedure, present information on a topic, or relate an incident.
10. Criteria for the prompt are not like those used in assessing writing for the On-demand Writing Test.

## Helping Students Develop as Writers And Prepare for the On-demand Writing Test

### Some Important "Targets" for Instruction:

1. Understanding the different purposes called for in the state's prompts: narrate an incident, persuade, inform
2. Distinguishing open-response work and work relevant to on-demand writing
3. Organizing in an I-B-C and in logical paragraphs
4. Writing a good introduction and a good conclusion
5. Establishing a specific purpose: controlling idea, claim, angle, opinion, "should statement," etc.
6. Providing specific, relevant, thorough support for the purpose: facts, examples, reasons, a story from experience, references to reading material, references to learning, charts, diagrams, graphs, comparisons, etc.
7. Helping students understand and apply key development techniques needed for On-demand Writing: persuasive strategies; use of narrative to support a claim; organizing methodically to provide information (and including explanation with information).
8. Organizing in a methodical pattern, including "signal sentences" to indicate the purposes of different paragraphs and to guide the reader (Example: "What I have experienced proves that ...."; "There are good reasons to take action.")
9. Providing explanations that "push" the writer's purpose, show idea development, and indicate awareness of readers
10. Responding and referring to materials provided ("Givens" of the prompt: text, graph, diagram, etc.)

Of course, ALL of the criteria in the Scoring Guide/Writing Rubric apply to writing for the On-demand Writing Test.

# Kentucky Writing Scoring Rubric

0	1	2	3	4
CONTENT				
Purpose and Audience; Idea Development and Support				
<p>The writing:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li><input type="checkbox"/> Lacks purpose</li> <li><input type="checkbox"/> Lacks awareness of audience</li> <li><input type="checkbox"/> Lacks idea development; may provide random details</li> </ul>	<p>The writing:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li><input type="checkbox"/> Attempts to establish a general purpose; lacks focus</li> <li><input type="checkbox"/> Indicates limited awareness of audience's needs</li> <li><input type="checkbox"/> Demonstrates limited idea development with few details and/or weak support; may attempt to apply some characteristics of the genre</li> </ul>	<p>The writing:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li><input type="checkbox"/> Attempts to establish and maintain a narrowed purpose; some lapses in focus</li> <li><input type="checkbox"/> Indicates some awareness of audience's needs; makes some attempt to communicate with an audience; may demonstrate some voice and/or tone</li> <li><input type="checkbox"/> Demonstrates some idea development with details/support; support may be unelaborated, irrelevant and/or repetitious; may apply some characteristics of the genre</li> </ul>	<p>The writing:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li><input type="checkbox"/> Establishes and maintains an authentic focused purpose throughout</li> <li><input type="checkbox"/> Indicates an awareness of audience's needs; communicates adequately with audience; conveys voice and/or appropriate tone</li> <li><input type="checkbox"/> Demonstrates depth of idea development with specific, sufficient details/support; applies characteristics of the genre</li> </ul>	<p>The writing:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li><input type="checkbox"/> Establishes and maintains an authentic and insightful focused purpose throughout</li> <li><input type="checkbox"/> Indicates a strong awareness of audience's needs; communicates effectively with audience; sustains distinctive voice and/or appropriate tone</li> <li><input type="checkbox"/> Demonstrates reflective, analytical and/or insightful idea development; provides specific, thorough support; skillfully applies characteristics of the genre</li> </ul>
0	1	2	3	4
STRUCTURE				
Organization; unity and coherence; Sentences; structure and length				
<p>The writing:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li><input type="checkbox"/> Demonstrates random organization</li> <li><input type="checkbox"/> Lacks transitional elements</li> <li><input type="checkbox"/> Demonstrates incorrect sentence structure throughout</li> </ul>	<p>The writing:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li><input type="checkbox"/> Demonstrates ineffective or weak organization</li> <li><input type="checkbox"/> Demonstrates limited and/or ineffective transitional elements</li> <li><input type="checkbox"/> Demonstrates some ineffective or incorrect sentence structure</li> </ul>	<p>The writing:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li><input type="checkbox"/> Demonstrates logical organization with lapses in coherence</li> <li><input type="checkbox"/> Demonstrates some effective transitional elements</li> <li><input type="checkbox"/> Demonstrates simple sentences; may attempt more complex sentences but lacks control of sentence structure</li> </ul>	<p>The writing:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li><input type="checkbox"/> Demonstrates logical, coherent organization</li> <li><input type="checkbox"/> Demonstrates logical, effective transitional elements throughout</li> <li><input type="checkbox"/> Demonstrates control and variety in sentence structure</li> </ul>	<p>The writing:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li><input type="checkbox"/> Demonstrates careful and/or subtle organization that enhances the purpose</li> <li><input type="checkbox"/> Demonstrates varied and subtle transitional elements throughout</li> <li><input type="checkbox"/> Demonstrates control, variety and complexity in sentence structure to enhance meaning</li> </ul>
0	1	2	3	4
CONVENTIONS				
Language: grammar and usage; word choice; Correctness: spelling, punctuation, capitalization, abbreviation and documentation				
	<p>The writing:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li><input type="checkbox"/> Demonstrates lack of control in grammar and usage</li> <li><input type="checkbox"/> Demonstrates incorrect or ineffective word choice</li> <li><input type="checkbox"/> Demonstrates lack of control in correctness</li> </ul>	<p>The writing:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li><input type="checkbox"/> Demonstrates some control of grammar and usage with some errors that do not interfere with communication</li> <li><input type="checkbox"/> Demonstrates simplistic and/or imprecise word choice</li> <li><input type="checkbox"/> Demonstrates some control of correctness with some errors that do not interfere with communication</li> </ul>	<p>The writing:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li><input type="checkbox"/> Demonstrates control of grammar and usage relative to length and complexity</li> <li><input type="checkbox"/> Demonstrates acceptable word choice appropriate for audience and purpose</li> <li><input type="checkbox"/> Demonstrates control of correctness relative to length and complexity</li> </ul>	<p>The writing:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li><input type="checkbox"/> Demonstrates control of grammar and usage to enhance meaning</li> <li><input type="checkbox"/> Demonstrates accurate, rich and/or precise word choice appropriate for audience and purpose</li> <li><input type="checkbox"/> Demonstrates control of correctness to enhance communication</li> </ul>